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By SDT/RSW Date 7/23/98

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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SUGGESTED DISTRIBUTION

Attached are three copies of the Policy Planning Paper for Tunisia, as approved by the members of the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Africa.

The paper constitutes an official statement of US policy towards Tunisia and should be used as a guideline by all elements of the Embassy in the preparation of policy statements, action plans and future budgetary projections.

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AF - W. Beverly Carter, Jr.

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*4-41 to TUNIS*  
REPRODUCED AT THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

TUNISIA: Policy Planning Paper

*POL 1 TUN-245*

Approved by the NSC Interdepartmental Group for Africa

June 1971

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TUNISIA: Policy Planning Paper

A. U.S. Interests in Tunisia

1. Continuation of Tunisia's friendly and constructive voice in North African and middle eastern affairs which may in the future be increasingly helpful to larger US interests in the area.

2. Because of overall U.S. political and military interests in the Mediterranean, Tunisia's strategic position, flanking the Sicilian straits, is important to the United States and NATO, especially in the event of non-nuclear or nuclear war on a limited scale. Access to Tunisian ports for recreation purposes by the Sixth Fleet has also supported U.S. political-military and intelligence objectives.

3. Tunisia's emphasis on economic development offers a market for U.S. goods, services, and possibly, a field for private investment. The internal market would be limited, however, owing to Tunisia's restricted resource base and relatively small purchasing power.

4. Thus, U.S. interests in Tunisia are mainly political and strategic; U.S. economic interest is represented largely by the important USG investment in Tunisian development, which reflects our political interests and the capabilities and intentions of Tunisian leaders with respect to economic and social development and political stability. Our strategic interests are essentially negative. It would be contrary to our interests for Tunisia to be utilized by a hostile power capable of military action against NATO.

B. U.S. Objectives Over the Next Five Years

1. Maintenance of close and mutually useful U.S.-Tunisian relationship, including frank governmental exchanges on bilateral as well as area matters and objectives. In this process seek Tunisian understanding of the limitations on U.S. economic and military assistance.

2. Encouragement of Tunisia's constructive role and increasingly influential position on issues within the Arab and non-aligned world.

3. Maintenance of internal stability during a difficult and crucial transitional period in domestic political and economic affairs.

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4. Improvement in Tunisia's economic performance especially productivity, through better use of existing investment and resources and with emphasis on agriculture and population control.

5. Increased western European interest in Tunisia's sound economic development and security against external aggression.

6. To assist in maintenance and gradual modernization of Tunisia's modest self-defense capability.

7. Continued U.S. access to the Tunisian market on a non-discriminatory basis for U.S. goods, services, and private capital.

C. Tunisia's Objectives Vis-a-Vis the United States

1. Sustain a high level of U.S. economic and technical assistance to (a) make up domestic food deficit on concessional terms until agricultural production increases, (b) provide local currency and dollar investment in the development program, and (c) provide Tunisia with its own improved human resource and institutional base for carrying on its continued development.

2. Seek maximum public evidence of U.S. interest in Tunisian security and obtain enough U.S. grant military assistance to provide a credible defensive capability at home and abroad, consistent with achievement of economic and social development goals.

3. Maintain sufficient "great power" interest to give Tunisia flexibility in dealing with its European and Arab neighbors without reducing Tunisia's ability to seek accommodations with them.

4. Persuade the United States to move closer to certain Tunisian positions on world issues, especially in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Africa, while maintaining present friendly ties with the United States.

D. Recommended Courses of Action

1. Political

a. Continue to cultivate close ties and frank consultations between leaders of both countries,

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including periodic visits by Tunisian chiefs of State and Government to the U.S. and high level visits to Tunisia.

- b. Welcome, in pursuit of larger U.S. objectives, a greater flexibility and influence on the part of the GOT in world affairs, even if this means more frequent differences of view with the U.S. on some specific issues.
- c. Encourage Tunisia to diversify its political and economic ties with non-communist countries, especially with Western Europe.
- d. Continue the development of pro-Western internal security forces on a scale related to Tunisia's needs, especially through training.

## 2. Economic

- a. Within the framework of the Tunisian Consultative Group, participate with other donors in providing economic and technical assistance, especially through PL 480 loans and grants, commodity (program) loans, project loans and technical assistance. U.S. assistance efforts should be reduced as Tunisian production and other donor inputs more nearly meet Tunisia's requirements.
- b. Encourage additional assistance by other donors, both bilateral and through multinational agencies, and seek better coordination of all foreign assistance.
- c. Support where useful the role of private U.S. organizations in Tunisia, including the Ford Foundation, the International Executive Service Corps, AALC, and the Voluntary Agencies.
- d. Coordinate more closely the assistance efforts of all U.S. Government agencies, including HEW, Agriculture, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Peace Corps with the main objectives of the U.S. economic and technical assistance effort, especially in the case of foreign currency programs.

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- e. Attempt to reduce the area of Tunisian commercial discrimination against U.S. exports and to prepare the way for Tunisian participation in the U.S. generalized preferences trading proposal.
- f. Encourage the GOT wherever possible to move towards a private enterprise system, remove restrictions on exports, free its currency, and limit its borrowings for capital projects without clearly defined, economically sound objectives.

### 3. Military

- a. Continue to assist Tunisia within the limits of available resources in support of the new Tunisian defense plan, but at the same time encourage western nations to increase modestly their military assistance to Tunisia. The GOT and donors of military assistance should continue to be encouraged to relate planned military programs to Tunisia's economic development requirements.
- b. In connection with (a) above, obtain increased cooperation from the GOT in allowing greater contact between U.S. and Tunisian military and in developing intelligence on Soviet military activities, especially Soviet naval and air activities in the Mediterranean.
- c. Maintain U.S. Navy (6th Fleet) ship visits to Tunisian ports at appropriate levels.

### 4. Cultural

- a. Maintain current level and quality of USIS programs in Tunisia, with emphasis on periodic high quality cultural presentations.
- b. Expand the programs for visits to the U.S. by potential leaders and youth and by grants to qualified Tunisian graduate students for M.A. or PhD programs.
- c. Encourage the teaching of English in Tunisia, primarily through a qualitative Peace Corps program, but also through USIS and USAID support if necessary.